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824 protective medicines (*dipiaba*) of the village. The fruits are eaten by herdboys, January to March. The first appearance of its flowers (October) indicates the time when chickens must not be hatched or bought, because of the danger of sand fleas (*madzɛdzɛ*). There are, incidentally, many other plants which indicate the approach of the seasons or the correct time for certain activities, e.g. when *musoso* (*Terminalia serecea*) blossoms, edible termites get their wings and children go out to catch them.

Muvizi (*Colocasia antiquorum*). Planted at home—in the old days also [262] in river gardens—to provide relish from August to November. The leaves take only a few minutes to cook, compared with an hour or more for many other relishes. The bulb is cooked separately, like sweet potatoes.

Muɔbyani (*Lanna edulis*). A soft wood used for milk pails and bowls. [262] The fruit, which is eaten by children and adults, ripens in November-December. The wood is not suitable for hut rafters, as it is attacked by [283] weevils, but the bark serves as a rough, unworked string for tying together the poles of such structures as pig pens. Water in which the leaves are crushed is used as an eye lotion.

Muvola (*Parinarium curatellifolium*). The fruit, called *grysappel* (grey [262 apple) in Afrikaans, is liked and of very great value in times of starvation. 731] It is said to have saved the people in the years 1894–6, when drought, locusts, and cattle diseases overwhelmed the country. At such times the fruit is prepared, like *morula*, in the form of a cider (*vureba*), which is yellowish and sweet. It also has economic uses.

824 We have in our list over a hundred different kinds of wild edible fruits 262 and berries, many of them, it is true, eaten chiefly by herdboys. But numerous wild fruits are relished by adults, such as wild figs (of which there are seven different kinds), *muukhoma* (*Burchemia discolor*), of which a tasty, if heavy, cake is made, *mudomma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), *mutazwa* (*Pouzolzia hypoleuca*), *munnthu* (*Syzygium cordatum*), *mutbe* (*Anona senegalensis*), and many others. The *morula* is, as we have seen, an important national beverage with valuable anti-scorbutic properties. There are also wild bananas (*muɔva*), long ago brought from the north, but now practically eradicated by animals. Not much reliance is placed upon cultivated fruits, but there are oranges, some pawpaws, and mangoes, planted by the early Christians; these have not subsequently been added to to any extent and they are very much neglected.

For relishes, without which porridge cannot be eaten, people rely largely upon nature. Apart from the leaves of pumpkins and beans, which are available from February to June, they use a great variety of wild spinaches, chief among which are blackjack (*Bidens pilosa*), *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*), and *thɛtbe* (*Amoranthus Thunbergi*). In our list we have forty-five greens or relishes. But not only plants provide relishes. In September and in the winter months, when greens are scarce, *mahoru* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Swaziae*), fatty black male termites, are a great standby. The female of the same species (*dinnɬwa*), which swarm from December to March, the rainy season, are so important in the national diet that they must be ritually 'bitten' (*hu luma*) and sent to the queen from every district. They are roasted, winnowed, and eaten as